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INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 4296
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO PRIORITY 4552
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA PRIORITY 9652
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 2541
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 3949
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 9669
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 0828
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KATHMANDU 001087

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DEPT FOR SCA/INS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/01/2016
TAGS: [PTER](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [NP](#)
SUBJECT: MAOISTS ASSERT THEIR PRESENCE

REF: A. KATHMANDU 1064

[1](#)B. KATHMANDU 928

Classified By: Ambassador James F. Moriarty. Reasons 1.4 (b,d).

Summary

[1](#)1. (C) Following their three month cease-fire announcement on April 27, the Maoists have been organizing mass meetings openly in Kathmandu (ref A) and the western terai, presumably to remind the seven-party alliance of their power and support in rural areas, and to pressure the Parties to meet the Maoist demand for "unconditional" constituent assembly elections. On April 29, the Royal Nepalese Army (RNA) attacked one such mass Maoist gathering in Nawalparasi District, injuring several people. Local Maoists closed down the east-west Mahendra highway for over 24 hours in response. Elsewhere, the Maoists continued to hold the Chief District Officer of Sarlahi District, whom they had abducted on April 6 (ref B), and the National Human Rights Commission urged Maoists to allow people to return to their homes. An RNA landmine accident on a base in Gulmi District killed eight new recruits. The RNA continued to investigate an April 26 incident in Belbari, Morang District in which RNA soldiers fired into a crowd killing six demonstrators. End Summary.

RNA Attacks Maoist Meeting

[1](#)2. (C) On April 29, the Royal Nepalese Army attacked a Maoist gathering in Nawalparasi District (western terai). Earlier in the day, a group of armed Maoists had paraded along one kilometer of the east-west Mahendra Highway in Nawalparasi urging, sometimes forcing, villagers to attend the meeting. Between 6,000 and 10,000 people, including more than two dozen local journalists, gathered with the armed Maoists in the jungle near a settlement to hear Maoist leaders speak. An RNA contact asserted to Emboff that Maoists shot at the RNA helicopter monitoring the event, causing the soldiers to return fire from the helicopter, injuring several people, including at least one of the Maoist speakers. However, media claimed the RNA action was unprovoked. Maoists in Nawalparasi protested the RNA's actions against the

"peaceful" gathering by burning tires and closing the east-west Mahendra Highway on April 29 until late in the afternoon of April 30. (Note: The RNA has used helicopters to attack several other recent Maoist gatherings, claiming the Maoists fired first, though on-site witnesses claim the RNA fired first. The RNA bombing at a school in Sindhupalchok District on March 27 is one such example. End note.)

Maoists Operate Openly in Terai

13. (C) A resident of Nawalparasi's neighboring Rupandehi District told Emboff that the Maoists were organizing mass meetings openly in the western terai since their cease-fire announcement on April 27. He contrasted a peaceful mass meeting in Rupandehi on April 30 with the Nawalparasi gathering the day before. The Maoists in Rupandehi did not carry arms. He said that following the Maoist declaration of a three-month cease-fire, people in the area were "relieved" that they would be safe for the next three months. He added, that the Parliament's unanimous support of a constituent assembly and call for the Maoists to give up arms added to the feeling of peace and normalcy. However, he stated that people still did not fully trust the Maoists. People knew that a constituent assembly was a Maoist demand and that the Maoists had only supported the seven-party alliance protest program in order to come to power. Our source maintained that the display of military power, such as the march in Nawalparasi on April 29, was intended to create pressure on the new Parliament to include Maoists in the new government.

Maoists Continue to Hold Abducted CDO

14. (U) On April 29, Maoists released nine RNA soldiers whom they had abducted on April 27 in Dhankuta District, (eastern hills). The Maoists still held the Chief District Officer of Sarlahi District, whom they had abducted on April 6 during an attack on District Headquarters (ref A). On April 30, the National Human Rights Commission appealed to the Maoists to allow a family in Jhapa District (eastern terai) to return home. The Maoists had locked the family out of their house since July 2005.

Accidental Blast Kills Eight RNA

15. (C) On April 29, a landmine planted by the RNA to protect the outer perimeter of the battalion headquarters at the District Headquarters of Gulmi (western hills) accidentally went off, killing eight soldiers and injuring nine others. The dead soldiers were new recruits who were digging trenches along the perimeter of the barracks. The RNA is investigating the unfortunate incident. An RNA source told Emboff that when the previous unit moved to a new Post, it had not given information to the incoming unit on the location of landmines that had been planted to protect the area from a Maoist attack.

RNA Still Investigating Belbari

16. (C) Although the RNA had publicly promised to release results of an investigation of April 25 and April 26 incidents in Belbari, Morang District (eastern terai) by April 30, the RNA now has extended the deadline. On April 25, the RNA claimed it received information that Maoists were planning an attack in the Belbari area. At about 2130 local time, an RNA patrol noted "suspicious movement" and fired, killing a 22-year old woman. The RNA issued a statement on April 26 saying the soldiers had rushed the victim to the hospital for treatment, but locals claimed the RNA had raped and then killed her. In a preliminary investigation, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) noted that the doctor who did the post-mortem on the 22-year old woman did not report any evidence of rape.

17. (C) On April 26, a few hundred locals gathered at the RNA

base in Belbari to protest the incident. An RNA statement issued the evening of April 26 reported that at 1400 "the crowd turned violent and started breaking the fences, dismantling barbed wire." Though the RNA tried non-violently to control the crowd, the protesters reportedly "ransacked two sentry towers and burned the main gate" and tried to "snatch weapons from sentries and even fired at security forces." The RNA statement continued, "to control the situation" and in self-defense, security forces opened fire and killed six demonstrators "on the spot," and injured eleven other demonstrators who were transported to the hospital. OHCHR interviews with demonstrators did not support the RNA's claim that demonstrators fired at the RNA. OHCHR reported that one security force member fired into the air to try to control the crowd. Security forces on opposite corners failed to distinguish the friendly fire, and open fired into the agitated crowd, displaying excessive use of force. On April 30, though still investigating the incident, the RNA pledged to provide 50,000 NR (700 USD) in emergency relief to families of the victims.

Comment

18. (C) Though they have announced a cease-fire, the Maoists are "peacefully" parading through villages with their arms, forcing people to support the Maoist demand for unconditional constituent assembly elections. Such displays of weapons are disturbing, especially as the Maoists are urging the government to remove their terrorist tag. Until the Maoists give up arms, their true intentions will remain suspect.
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